**CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT**

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UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Letter dated 6 April 1971 from the Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic has delivered to the delegation of the USSR in the Committee on Disarmament a statement of the Government of the German Democratic Republic and has requested that it be brought to the attention of all States Members of the Committee. The aforesaid statement sets out the position of the German Democratic Republic with regard to problems of disarmament and limitation of the arms race, which are on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament.

I request you to arrange for my letter to be circulated by the Secretariat of the Committee together with the statement of the Government of the German Democratic Republic attached thereto as an official document of the Committee on Disarmament.

(signed) A. ROSHCHIN

Representative of the USSR in the Committee on Disarmament

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Statement of the Government of the German Democratic Republic
to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament

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The Government of the German Democratic Republic attaches great importance to questions of disarmament and arms limitation which are on the agenda of the 1971 Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. A solution to these problems would help towards curbing the arms race, in particular in the field of weapons of mass destruction, and would pave the way to more extensive disarmament measures.

For this reason, the Government of the German Democratic Republic deems it appropriate to set out its position with regard to questions that are under discussion at the present session of the Committee on Disarmament.

I

The Government of the German Democratic Republic strongly supports any effort aimed at reducing and eliminating the dangers arising from weapons of mass destruction. In this connexion, it notes with satisfaction that the consistent struggle of a majority of States for a ban on bacteriological (biological) and chemical weapons has brought about its first results, and that further progress is to be expected. At present it is necessary to take such measures as would remove such weapons from the arsenals of States.

In accordance with the position of the majority of States, the German Democratic Republic pursues the aim of eliminating bacteriological and chemical weapons once and for all, because the very existence and stockpiling of such weapons constitute an extremely great danger to the security of peoples. In this connexion, the Government of the German Democratic Republic again speaks out decisively against the use of such weapons by the United States of America in Indo-China.

Particularly alarming is the fact that these weapons of mass destruction are stockpiled in densely populated areas, as is done in the case of the US combat weapons located with the consent of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany on its territory in the immediate vicinity of the State borders of the German Democratic Republic. In addition, scientific institutes of the Federal Republic of Germany are working on the development of new types of such weapons.

In the interests of achieving further progress towards a complete ban on bacteriological and chemical weapons, the Government of the German Democratic Republic welcomes and supports the Draft Convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) weapons and toxins and on their destruction submitted by the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty which are Members of the Committee on Disarmament, and by the Mongolian People's Republic.

Such an agreement would provide for the complete prohibition of bacteriological (biological) weapons and their destruction and would stress the significance of the 1925 Geneva Protocol and in the first place its provision prohibiting the use of bacteriological and chemical weapons. The obligation to continue negotiations on the complete prohibition of chemical weapons and their destruction expresses readiness to take action to eliminate these weapons, too.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic also fully approves the obligation contained in the draft convention under which the States parties undertake to take as soon as possible, the necessary legal and administrative measures for the prohibition of bacteriological weapons.

The Constitution and the Penal Code of the German Democratic Republic stipulate that any misuse of science directed against peace, mutual understanding among peoples, against the life and dignity of man is prohibited and that the use of bacteriological and chemical weapons is subject to punishment.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic assures the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament that it will, within the bounds of its possibilities, work actively for the achievement and speedy conclusion of the Convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) weapons and toxins and their destruction. Moreover, it will continue to advocate the adoption of effective measures for the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and for their destruction.

II

The Government of the German Democratic Republic considers that the Treaty on the prohibition of the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and ocean floor and the subsoil thereof, which has recently been open for signature, is an important success in the activities of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. It signed the Treaty on the first day it was open for signature. The Treaty provides further evidence that it is possible to achieve measures for arms limitation and disarmament and that negotiations on these questions can be useful and fruitful if the participants conduct them with a sense of responsibility and in a spirit of good will and seek to achieve agreements which will benefit all peoples.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic would welcome the provision of the Sea-Bed Treaty for the prohibition of any military use of the sea-bed to be carried out soon.

III

The Government of the German Democratic Republic feels that in view of the threat of nuclear war hanging over mankind, measures in regard to nuclear arms limitation and disarmament are of particularly great importance.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic considers that the universal application of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the speedy coming into force of the safeguards agreements between the IAEA and the parties to the Treaty as provided for by the Treaty are key questions in the international struggle for disarmament and arms limitation.

On 25 August 1970 the German Democratic Republic officially declared its readiness to the IAEA immediately to start negotiations for the conclusion of a safeguard agreement as provided for by Article III of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic considers that the ratification of the Non-Proliferation Treaty by all States, in particular by those which have capabilities for manufacturing nuclear weapons, is necessary and urgent. This applies especially to the Federal Republic of Germany whose Government has so far not ratified the Non-Proliferation Treaty and has not yet entered into negotiations with IAEA for the conclusion of a safeguards agreement.

IV

Almost ten years have passed since the adoption of resolution 1653 (XVI) on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons, but the basic principles of that resolution have still not been confirmed by a treaty on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. The Government of the German Democratic Republic still considers the draft convention on that question submitted by the USSR at the XXII United Nations General Assembly to be a good basis for such a prohibition. A convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons to which all nuclear weapon States would subscribe would be an effective contribution towards peace and the security of peoples. Such a convention would undoubtedly facilitate the adoption in the future of measures to limit, reduce and finally destroy nuclear weapon potentials.

V

The Government of the German Democratic Republic considers that a treaty on the prohibition of underground nuclear weapon tests is another important measure feasible today for limiting nuclear armaments. Already the Non-Proliferation Treaty referred to such a prohibition as being one of the most urgent measures.

In view of the progress that has been made in identifying underground nuclear weapon tests by national means of detection, the achievement of such a treaty depends exclusively on whether the USA is finally prepared to give up underground nuclear weapon testing.

The German Democratic Republic is prepared to participate in an international exchange of seismic data within the framework of a universal treaty on the prohibition of underground nuclear weapon tests which would respect the principles of the sovereign equality of States.

VI

The Government of the German Democratic Republic, as in the past, regards general and complete disarmament as one of the most noble objectives of its policy. It reaffirms its readiness to support any proposal likely to bring mankind nearer to the achievement of this goal.

Agreements limiting the arms race in nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction improve the prospects for the achievement of agreements in other fields conducive to general and complete disarmament. Such measures would increase international security.